

School News

St. Mary's Catholic School

August 30, 2008

Nine Days in August

We were able to get a head start on most of the Gillespie County schools by having our first day August 18th. We have had a wonderful start – we thank our teachers for their hard work in preparing the classrooms and giving orientation to our parents.



Our students have been cooperative and enthusiastic – it is a wonderful time for St. Mary's School!

School Council Meeting

Our council will meet Monday, September 8th, at 6:30 p.m. in the school library. Guests are always welcome to attend. The agenda and approved minutes will be posted on the school council bulletin board.

P.T.C. Meeting

The P.T.C. will meet Wednesday, September 10, 6:30 p.m. in the gym.

P.T.C. Volunteer Forms Update

So far 89% of the parents have turned in their volunteer sign-up forms. That is 277 out of 311 students that attend SMS. Great Job! For those of you who have not had a chance to turn them back please do so. If you need another form please check by the office to pick one up. Turkey Dinner is right around the corner!

Thanks again,

St. Mary's PTC

New Students

We welcome 75 new students – those who are on our campus for the first time include: **3K** – CJ Davis, William Degenhardt, Evan Gold, Madison Habeeb, Jack Haight, Jack Helfrich, Liam Matthes, Nichlas Mikosh, Andrew Mills, Stran Mohr, Jim Nestler, Charli Ann Olfers, Hyleigh Ottmers, Olivia Redix, Bella Rodriguez, Emily Rodriguez, Sydney Schandua, Presley Schumpelt, Gary Seidenberger, Addison Simpson, Jorja Simpson, Hannah Smith, Jack Stephens, Elle Theis, Jenna Wallendorf, Bryn Wehmeyer; **4K** – Harley Boerner, Garron Boettcher, Lainey Clark, Gabriel Cross, Skylar Denton, Luke DiCuffa, Faith Geistweidt, Colton Greenfield, Charlie Johnson, Cade Lehne, Bradford McMahon, Claire McMahon, Amie Pyka, James Sebera, Markos Urias, Kaitlyn Weidenfeller; **5K** – Mackenzie Condarco-Snow, Elizabeth Beckmann, Brittley Bowers, Michael Meeks, Enzo Perrin, Jakob Schandua, Baylie Seegers, Rory Shelton, Matthew Willingham; **1st** – Camryn Mikosh, Brandon Valderaz; **2nd** – Brant Bowers; **3rd** – Bryan Baker, Elizabeth Calhoun, Sache Perrin, Sonia Valderaz; **4th** – Ashley Baker, Bryce Bowers, Sawyer Brown, Allie Spies; **5th** – Arabella Garcia, Dylan Hellums; **6th** – Braden Bowers, Savannah Burns, Cole Gentle, Meagan Hellums, Abigail Ottmers, Samuel Studebaker; **7th** – Carolyn Calhoun, Justin Diaz, Joshua Preston; **8th** – Brittney Haggerton, Kyle Patteson.

P.T.C. Sells Spirit Shirts

SMS Spirit shirts are available in the office. Students may wear these gray shirts on Fridays to show Apache Spirit. Prices are \$10 for Youth XS to Adult XL and \$12 for Adult XXL to XXXXL.

Sexual Misconduct Awareness Training

Our first two training sessions for parents are scheduled for Wednesday, September 3rd. A session will be in the cafeteria at 12:30 p.m., and a second session will be in the library at 6:30 p.m. The training sessions will last approximately 30 minutes. Adults must complete this training if they plan to participate in school activities.

Criminal Background Checks

Forms are available in the office to authorize your criminal background search. Please complete the form and submit \$6 to pay for the cost of the search. This search must be completed every 3 years.

Volunteers Needed

St. Mary's has approximately 44 new families this school year. We are trying to initiate a "buddy family" program to help our new families feel welcome and informed. If you and your family would like to participate in being a "buddy family" please contact Barbara Williams @ 990-9228 or Libby Vick @ 9901425.

More Volunteers Needed

We are forming a volunteer schedule to help relieve teachers of recess duty. This would allow our teachers additional time in the day to attend to other pressing needs. There will still be one teacher on the playground, and two adults. Volunteers are needed for 30 minute shifts between the hours of 10:50 a.m. and 12:50 p.m. This is a great way to familiarize yourself with playground activities and visit your child after lunch. It also lets our teachers know how much we appreciate their hard work.

Please contact Barbara Williams @ 990-9228 for more information.

Still More Volunteers Needed

Our early-morning circle drop-off has become very popular this year. A staff member is available to help the young students exit the car, but the traffic flow doesn't allow that staff member to easily escort students into the school building.

A volunteer is needed to help this staff member from 7:30 a.m. until 8:00 a.m. If we had five volunteers we could fill the week.

Morning Drop-Off Reminders

We have a few areas to improve for our morning drop-off routine:

- When dropping off in the high school parking lot – please pull into a marked parking spot before allowing students to exit the car. If parents pull into the drive and stop it leaves cars behind them "hanging" in the street. They also want to turn in but they have no place to go.
- When dropping off in the white-curbed loading zone – please pull forward as far as possible – the orange cone marks the forward spot. If parents stop short it often creates a back-up of cars that are left "hanging" in the intersection.
- When dropping off at any street location – please do not drop off students in the street behind already parked cars.

St. Mary's 4H Club Meeting

Our first meeting of the year is set for Tuesday, September 2nd, 7:00 p.m. in St. Joseph's Hall. This is the enrollment meeting that will allow students to sign up for the many activities held throughout the year. Contact Tanya Vestal, 997-4535 for more information.

Art Alliance Gift

We thank the Fredericksburg Alliance of Arts & Antiques, Incorporated for their most generous donation of \$400 to our school's art program. The funds will be used to purchase art supplies for our students.

Would You Like to Feed a Teacher?

This year we will have seven early dismissal faculty meetings. All of these, with the exception of January, are on the first Friday of the month. Our custom is to provide a lunch for our staff on these days. Last year we did have several businesses and groups who were very generous in providing lunch for the approximately 30 teachers/staff. If you would like to have your business participate or participate as an individual please call our Teacher Appreciation Chair – Catherine Zenner, 997-0362 or the school office, 997-3914. You may select any one of the meeting months: September, October, January, February, March, April, May.

Aluminum Can Drive

Our Student Council is sponsoring a can drive on Thursday, October 16th. The students will collect cans that morning for recycling. The money earned with the drive will be used to sponsor student activities throughout the year.

Opportunity for Seamstress

Our Apache mascot, Mrs. Weinheimer, reports that the Indian costume she has worn for the past 9 years has become tattered. If you would be able to repair or replace the costume please call the school, 997-3914.

Absent Student Homework

This year we will ask parents, if at all possible, to wait until the child returns to school from an illness before making up homework. The child will be given an extra day after returning to make up the work.

If a parent does want to get the homework the day of an illness, we invite them

to come to the child's home room between 3:15 and 3:30 p.m. to pick books and assignments. This will work easily for grades K to 5 – for junior high it will be more difficult since some home room teachers work only mornings and others have after-school coaching assignments.

If a child has a scheduled absence of one or more days, we ask the child to wait until returning to school before getting books and assignments.

Thank You Cub Scout Leaders

We thank our scout leaders Nicole Wienecke and Libby Vick and their scouts for cleaning up the Asian Jasmine flower bed in front of school. It looks great!

Scrip Card Sales

Scrip cards give cash to our school! They help fund textbooks, salaries, computers, and everything else our school needs. These funds reduce tuition and fees that parents have to pay. The best part is Scrip cards can do this without costing the purchaser a penny.

A \$100 HEB Scrip card will give the school \$5 and the purchaser \$100 worth of groceries or gasoline. In July we sold scrip cards worth \$27,700 – the school profit was more than \$1,300.

We encourage you to support the Scrip card program this year. Scrip cards can be purchased with check or cash, and the amount can be included with your tuition or cafeteria payment – no need to write a separate check.

We do have an inventory of assorted cards on hand. If you are needing a gift use one of the Scrip cards – we currently have a few cards of: Shell, Starbucks, Fridays, ToysRUs, Ace, Chilis-Macaroni, Eddie Bauer, Lord & Taylor, Macys, Home Depot, and Loews Cinema.

Shopping for Christmas? There are many Scrip cards that can be ordered – we do have a list in the office and the Great Lakes Scrip Center has a comprehensive list.

Angel Food Ministries

The Fredericksburg United Methodist Church is the local sponsor for this cooperative. We have order forms available in the office – wonderful food bargains for families or senior citizens. Order by September 9, and pick up is Saturday, September 27. They will appreciate all help in packaging and distributing the foods for this ministry.

The Angel Food Ministry has been in existence for 14 years; its mission is to provide balanced, nutritional for families.

Technology

St. Mary's Technology is taking off!

A few things have happened during the summer, and some improvements are still in progress:

- 1) Time Warner completed their fiber optic project. We now have reliable, ultra-high speed connections that link all of our buildings.
- 2) We have a new email system for all St. Mary's staff that is effective September 1st. All staff emails will be in the form ****@stmarysmail.com. The **** represent the teachers first initial and last name. i.e. bpahl@stmarysmail.com
- 3) We have a web-based Accelerated Reader Program that will allow parents to review AR student progress from their home computer. Parents can also review what tests and books are available for AR testing.
- 4) We will continue to have teacher web sites, the grade portal for monitoring student grades from home, homework listed on the web site.
- 5) We will include family and staff emails in the Parent/Student Directory.
- 6) We will have new laptop computers for our teachers to use.
- 7) We will have new laptop computers for our 8th graders to use throughout the year.
- 8) We will provide extensive technology training for our staff.
- 9) We will continue to use the web-based software program – K to the 8th Power, which provides sequential computer skill development and reinforcement of academic subjects. The curriculum is for grades Kindergarten to 8th.
- 10) We will have three computer carts, with 20 computers per cart. These computers will link our network and the internet through a wireless network. Each cart will also feature a wireless printer that will allow the laptops to print. The Computers On Wheels (COWs) will be located on the top two floors of the high school building, and on the top floor of the elementary building. We will no longer have a designated computer lab, but the COWs will visit the classrooms.
- 11) Each classroom will continue to have a permanent desk top computer for continual use throughout the day.
- 12) We will continue to use SuccessMaker, the computer program that provides remediation in Reading and Math for students who qualify for the Title I Program.
- 13) Each of the 3K and 4K classes will have desk top computers in their rooms for use in learning centers.
- 14) We have a new internet filter, Watchguard, which will protect our students from some of the dangers associated with their presence on the internet.